



S.V.S.P.

**EIN WOLGEMEYNTES ANTWORTSCHREIBEN AN DIE  
HOCHWÜRDIGEN UND WEITBERÜMBTEN  
HERRN BRÜDER DESZ HOCHPREISZLICHEN  
ROSENCREUTZ-ORDENS**

**A WELL-MEANT REPLY LETTER TO  
THE HIGHLY WORTHY AND WIDELY FAMOUS  
GENTLEMEN BROTHERS  
OF THE HIGHLY ESTIMABLE  
ROSICRUCIAN ORDER**

1619

translation:

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## SOURCE

1619, Ein wolgemeyntes Antwortschreiben An Die hochwürdigen und weiterümbten Herrn Brüder deß Hochpreiszlichen RosenCreutz-Ordens.

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## PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR

In 1614, 1615 and 1616 the renowned works *Fama Fraternitatis*<sup>1</sup>, *Confessio Fraternitatis*<sup>2</sup> and the *Chymische Hochzeit Christiani Rosenkreutz* appeared in Germany. These writings referred to the existence of the Rosicrucian Order in Europe and were succeeded by a declaration that was attached to the walls of Paris in 1623. Its contents were as follows.

"We, the representatives of the Highest Council of the Rose Cross reside visibly and invisibly in this city, at the grace of the Most High, to the heart of which the righteous turn. Without books or signs we speak, and this we learn to others as well, in all the languages of the countries where we want to stay, to liberate the human beings, our equals, from deadly errors. If ever someone wants to meet us out of sheer curiosity, he will never make contact with us. However, when his will urges him to have himself registered in the file of our Fraternity, then we, who can see through thoughts, shall show him that we truly keep our promises. Thus we do not state the location where we reside in this city, because the thoughts added to the genuine will of the reader will enable him to get to know us, and us to get to know him."

Of the present work, the *Wolgemeyntes Antwortschreiben* it strikes, that there is a resemblance with two previously published works. I mean the *Einfältige vnd kurze Antwort vber die auss-gegangene Fame vnd Confession der Christlichen hocher-leuchteten Brüderschafft des löblichen Ordens vom Rosen Creutz*, by Philipppo à Gabella, or C.V.H., 1615; and the *Sendtschreiben oder Einfeltige Antwort an die hocherleuchte*

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<sup>1</sup> *Fama fraternitatis Roseae Crucis oder 'Die Bruderschaft des Ordens der Rosenkreuzer*, Cassel, 1614.

<sup>2</sup> *Confession oder Bekandnusz, der Societet und Brüderschafft R.C. An die Gelehrten Europae*, Cassel, 1615.

*Brüderschafft desz hochlöblichen Ordens desz Rosen Creutzes Auff Die von ihnen ausgefertigte Famam und Confessionem der Fraternitet: Durch einen waren Liebhaber der vollkommenen Weiszheit gestellet und auszgesandt*, by C.H.C., 1615.

The similarities as to description and the (general) terms used between these three works are numerous, as follows.

		Einfältige Antwort	Sendt-schreiben	Wol-gemeynthes
1	The title of the work, as to style and plan	X	X	X
2	The opening passages, id.	X	X	
3	The initial surprise of the author about the appearing of the Fama and the Confessio	X	X	X
4	Christian love	X	X	X
5	The Holy Spirit	X	X	
6	Chosen ones	X	X	
7	Comfort	X	X	
8	Mercy	X	X	X
9	Mildness	X	X	X
10	Willingness	X	X	X

11	Very laudable Fraternity	X	X	X
12	Loyalty	X	X	X
13	Wordly richness	X	X	
14	Sin	X	X	
15	That the world and art have reached their highest and last point	X	X	
16	Seal of silence		X	X
17	A view about making public the name of the author	X	X	X
18	Dealing with what it means when the plea is not answered	X	X	X
19	The appeal to the Order not to ignore the writings	X	X	X

20	The signature with capital letters, separated by periods	X	X	X
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Ruud Muschter<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Member of the Grand Council of the A.M.O.R.C. (Dutch-speaking Jurisdiction) from March 21st 1988 to March 21st 2010.

## THE COVER

A well-meant reply letter  
to  
the highly worthy  
and widely famous Gentlemen Brothers  
of the highly estimable Rosicrucian Order.

Described by a lover  
of the divine wisdom.

May the elaborate arguments  
that are mentioned in it  
win all pious hearts over to the side  
of the Fraternity.



Frankfurt

With Johann Hofmann / In the year

1619

FIRST OF ALL I WISH THE VERY GIFTED, BY GOD  
HIGHLY APPRECIATED GENTLEMEN BROTHERS OF  
THE VERY ESTIMABLE ROSICRUCIAN ORDER, IN  
CHRISTIAN LOVE THE PEACE AND MERCY OF THE  
ONE AND ETERNAL DIVINE TRINITY.

Very enlightened Gentlemen, wise in God and excellent, your beloved Fama has come into my hands in 1615 after Easter mass. From this Fama I have gathered with the greatest awe the friendly and lovely invitation to your Brothers and their science, which invitation on the basis of certain arguments which are mentioned in your Confessio, was directed to all heads, ranks and scientists of Europe. I have not been able to lay my hands on this Confessio up to now, because of the remoteness of the realm. Next I have been captured by such an insistent desire, led by Christ, to inform myself about how the first initiator of your Fraternity had commenced on a journey to the sages of Damascus after he had learned from their existence, that I as well have put aside my unworthiness and inability, and also the worldly, infavourably and insultingly judging of this Fraternity and everything of the same nature, without giving it a second glance any longer.

Now that God has afflicted me for years with a heavy illness<sup>4</sup>, I saw - taking into account the miserable condition of me and all humanity - without a doubt through the influx of the Holy Spirit who, through a preceding temptation of the flesh, in the space of the mind had put his word forward to me - the scale of the worldly vanity and how far I had gone astray from the true purpose of the highest bliss and perfection. First I felt a remorse come up about my badly developed zeal and effort, with a

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<sup>4</sup> Considering the context the author does not seem to refer to a physical illness, but an illness of the mind, to wit the insufficiently being attuned to the inner life.

special willingness and great longing that if God through grace would have me cured, next I would dutifully strive after the highest bliss and perfection of soul and body, to his sanctification and honour; to the benefit of myself; and of all lovers of the truth, and the pious ones.

And I wanted to leave behind and abandon everything that might thwart me in this, which - now that it has pleased the highest God through his bottomless mercifulness to return to me my previous health - up to now I perform with such a seriousness and good progress, granted by God, that I am obliged to thank God the Almighty for it with praise and glory. Not only have I gained a good share in the most excellent aspects of all kinds of secret sciences, but it has also been accompanied with a suitable perception of the light of truth in the divine wisdom. Through this, but also before I ever heard about the Fama and Confessio and knew about it, I had certainly observed with compassion the falling short of the sciences.

However, in this state it has given me no little concern, that I have not been able to peacefully deliberate with anyone person who might have received my intention quite properly. For soon after I had begun to present my story, I have up to now sensed much arising quarrel and confusion with everyone. Therefore I chose to go away, much rather timely and obligingly, than too late with shame en ado<sup>5</sup>. With this I have always asked God in prayer for direction and guidance, as well as loyal and good companions.

From an exceptional assignment, exhortation and admonition from God regarding the contents of the Fama and Confessio you have the same intention and motive as I have (which

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<sup>5</sup> "Angelegenheit", in the sense of res (matter, affair), or a judicial process.

however through lack of time and through other affairs I have not been able to execute or make myself familiar with). Now you have also kindly brought his knowledge to light. Also you have proportioned the ripe judgment of all the learned readers of the Fama and the Confessio (to whom I do not count myself in the least, or merely to the most humble ones), to see whether you can agree with it. And after the most punctual investigation of the arts therein, you have promoted that they are revealed in print. Hence that I have interpreted this mild offer of yours in such a way, that God the Lord invigorates me through it; presents to me the accommodation of my request and wish; and after my proposal wants to grant me much more signposts and promoters than assistants and counsellors. This is why I cannot deem you publication to be a funny invention and fabrication. First of all, because I am aware that it does not contain anything impossible, as some - who demonstrate their ignorance with it - mean. And for the remainder I cannot believe at all - because this publication and the entire work have been published through an express command of God, ordained by him - that someone, let alone a Christian, would be so impious as to even having intended to lie to God with such a deliberate, horrendous and atrocious plan. Therefore it must actually stem from God, or the author has doubtlessly believed that this was the case; and these both must be known by their fruits<sup>6</sup>.

This is my solemn opinion, because your offer is aimed firstly at spreading God's honour, since you exhort all human beings to keep God in silence; warn them against blasphemy and temptation; and taunt heretics and try to resist them. Secondly, to come to a notion of nature, because you gladly exhibit your philosophy which is full of love and contains little envy; and also offer the high secrets voluntarily and unhindered to all those who confront you with modesty and a Christian answer. Thirdly, for the benefit of mankind, since your

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<sup>6</sup> Bible, Matthew, 12:33.

Fraternity brings glory to Germany and assists it, as well as you do all sincere, reasonable minds who should consider nothing more preferable than seeking wisdom to body, soul and possession. Fourthly, to end all damage and advance the truth. This is exactly the direction that the Reformation takes that is desired by you and all pious, prudent hearts. Finally, to be a witness of the love which is in you and undoubtedly is a token of the divine and close connection that first of all you have with God. You show obedience to God in the disclosing of it and in performing his command and exhortation. From this it can be explained, that you as well put in second place your own benefit and the natural inclination towards your children. On the other hand you are connected with your fellow-creatures, which sufficiently affirms that proclaiming the love of the Fraternity to all the Christian readers, and your greeting and total offer, can be considered no different than being the pure love to inspire. Let us very much thank God the Almighty, who provides his pious and loved servants with similar secrets through his unsurpassed goodness - and has them offered and granted through his ever greater and more visible mercy via those to all human beings on earth who resist him - for his paternal love, compassion and care, through which he provides everybody with it. After this the pious hearts can only have little objection to join you at such an offer on your behalf; make a successful start with the desired works; and the more clearly enlighten their knowledge regarding God by observing his wondrous creatures.

To perform this, is what I wanted to offer you very humbly in the accepted German language, as your *Fama en Confessio* have come to me in it. You have frequently promised, that where you are addressed with modesty and a Christian answer, you will not act hesitant in revealing yourself in accessible print by name, the place of your assembly and what one might further desire from you. Also, that no-one who will make his name

known will fail to have a personal conversation with someone of your Fraternity, or - when he has difficulty with this - in writing. There also is your statement, made with certainty, that somebody who is seriously and heartily on your side, will benefit from it as to possession, body and soul. Yes, you openly spoke out as well, that the sincerity and hope of somebody who will come forward under the seal of silence and longs for your company, will not be betrayed. Because of this promise I very much beg you through God and the Christian love that you will determine<sup>7</sup> that I - having been enabled by God on the basis of his mercy that I see this light (sed absit gloria dicto<sup>8</sup>) and may hope for experiencing the perfect Enlightenment - will be taken up by you in your Fraternity.

As I notice that through the pure mercy of God I can see the light, I most strongly desire to look into the light directly and indeed experience its beneficial Enlightenment. However, now that I am surrounded by bad company and steadfast objections, I do not find myself strong enough in my youth, whilst I should oppose them and withdraw myself from them, and therefore I cannot give enough room and space to the spirit of God that flows into me, and cannot completely surrender me to it, although I would very much like to do so. Therefore I have finally decided, after the loyal counsel of Christ our Lord and his apostle, to completely turn away from the world and ill dialogue, and on the contrary look for good en pious folks for company. As I hope to find these, or even much more, loyal protectors with you, I have not been able to omit coming forward to you and, with my complete will, entering your Fraternity. With that I want to increase it in number, through service to God and my fellow-creatures, whilst abolishing evil and promoting good, as far as God and you will deem me worthy to do so. Me, who previously in mind and many works,

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<sup>7</sup> "dignieren". Translation uncertain.

<sup>8</sup> 'but I tell you, that it is without [my] glorification'.

just like so many others, was such a big child of the world, God the Lord has attracted to such thoughts, and he has added a calm mind, love and inclination to it. In this he has, under so many hindrances, deterrences and barricades by the devil, the world and my own flesh, exhorted me, helped me along and kept me steadfast. And you also, to whom I attribute seriousness, loyalty and sincerity, in the sense that what you have promised - namely that nobody will be betrayed by all this, but will have preference as to possessions, body and soul - has been anchored completely in my mind without any doubt.

As regards my situation: I am a free, single person of honourable parents and family. My study is aimed at knowledge of God and his creations. It is my intention that I will make progress in it to the honour of God and to the benefit of my fellow-creatures; making the beloved truth to my lead; for the remainder detach myself from the world; and only abandon myself to God and admit him. With that a thousand or more other matters and dismals thwart me, beside the above mentioned affairs. They will admittedly end in due course with the help of God, but - with your assistance, highly regarded Fraternity - they might already be diminished, with which I only hope that I will not fail in this, now that you invite, call and admonish each and everyone to it. I have considered it unnecessary to make myself known other than in this manner, as you have only demanded that one makes oneself known under the seal of silence; and through special revelation you admit posterity to your love, which was established *Reuverendo Autore Fraternitatis constitueret*<sup>9</sup>. Through this you will be able enough to get to know what more you deem necessary to learn about me. I will not make objections against this well deliberated measure indeed, but humble myself before the almighty hand of God, and through Jesus Christ attentively ask to determine everything to his divine honour and the well-being

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<sup>9</sup> 'through the honourable light of the Fraternity'.

of me and my fellow-creatures. You however, I want to ask humbly with emphasis, to inform me as quickly as possible after receipt of this writing - be it in writing or in person - what I must abide by and whether your answer is yes or no, and whether you will not nourish me with postponed hope too long and in vain.

Herewith I commend us all in the protection of the Most High, and with this I offer all my power<sup>10</sup> into your service, given July 8th 1618 A.D.

Your servant,

S.V.S.P.



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<sup>10</sup> "Vermügen." In the German language this stands for both 'financial assets', 'power' and 'ability'. It is uncertain what the author means.